



# MIDLAND HEALTH & SENIOR SERVICES

A DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

## PUBLIC HEALTH REVIEW

Winter 2013

### Midland Health Department Works to Control Communicable Diseases

All 50 states and United States territories have laws, statutes or other regulations that mandate reporting of communicable or infectious diseases and have the authority to collect and monitor a central repository of disease case information where patterns, clusters and outbreaks may be detected.

Timely and complete disease reporting allows public health practitioners to monitor and respond to the changing health status of their community. It also helps ensure that prevention activities are successful and that public health and community programs have the resources they need.



At the MHD, the goal of the Communicable Disease Program, is to protect the health of City of Midland / Midland County residents by providing surveillance, investigation and intervention of communicable diseases that threaten the health of the public. These include all notifiable-conditions, TB, STDs, and HIV. Examples of commonly reported conditions include pertussis, salmonella and infectious hepatitis.

The MHD Communicable Disease Program is the backbone of public health surveillance and control

Physicians, school administrators, child care operators, medical facilities and operators of restaurants and other food or drink establishments must report cases or suspected cases of reportable diseases to MHD.

For most reportable diseases, cases are reported to MHD through a number of mechanisms, including phone calls, fax, mail and electronic reporting forms.

Following the initial notification, MHD begins an epidemiologic investigation.

A communicable disease nurse or health inspector collects demographic, clinical, laboratory, epidemiologic and sometimes case contact information and verifies that a reported case meets the reporting requirements by the standardized case definitions. The Communicable Disease Control program also offers condition-specific services and interventions.

Information gathered is used to prevent the spread of diseases and to educate physicians, health care providers and the public regarding Vaccine Preventable Diseases and other Notifiable Conditions. The notifiable case information is confidentially reported to the Texas Department of State Health Services via the National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS).



Another MHD Communicable Diseases service is providing follow up by a nurse with Public Safety Workers (i.e. police, fire fighters, EMT's, etc.) after a possible exposure to a communicable disease while on the job.

The MHD Communicable Disease Control Program is just one way that the health department is working to keep Midland County residents healthy .

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## Citizens Encouraged to Get the Flu Vaccine



Midland Health & Senior Services is offering the seasonal flu vaccine for children and adults. This year's flu vaccine is an all-in one inoculation that offers protection against multiple flu strains including the H1N1 virus.

Midland Health & Senior Services also has the Flu Mist available for children 2-18 years of age. It is quadivalent, meaning it protects against four strains of the flu virus.

Officials don't anticipate this season to be much different from last flu season, but that doesn't diminish the importance of getting vaccinated. "I encourage everyone to get the flu shot now so that you are protected this flu season" stated Dr. James Humphreys, Medical Director for Midland Health & Senior Services and Health

Authority for City of Midland / Midland County.

It takes the body about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop and provide protection against the flu virus infection. Midland residents are urged to get their flu vaccine now. The Flu Vaccine is offered at the Midland Health Department.

Midland Health & Senior Services is located at 3303 W. Illinois Sp 22.

Clinic hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30pm Monday- Thursday and on Friday 8 a.m. till 12 p.m.

For more information call 432-681-7613.

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## Make food safety a holiday tradition

Midland Health & Senior Services is asking City of Midland / Midland County residents to make preparing food safely a holiday tradition and follow these basic safety tips in the preparation of their holiday meals.

- Keep raw meat and poultry, as well as their drippings, from coming into contact with other foods.
- Wash kitchen surfaces, cutting boards and utensils with hot, soapy water after preparing raw meat and poultry.
- Always wash hands with hot, soapy water immediately after touching raw poultry meat.
- Fresh uncooked turkey may be stored in your refrigerator for one to two days. Make sure it is wrapped carefully while being refrigerated.
- Keep packages of frozen poultry or meat frozen until use. Thaw poultry or meat in the refrigerator or microwave -- not on a counter or other surface at room temperature.
- Using a food thermometer, ensure that the center of the turkey breast and the center of the stuffing inside of a turkey are heated to at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit.
- If you do not have a thermometer, do *not* stuff the turkey. To see if an unstuffed turkey has been cooked adequately, pierce several parts of the turkey with fork. The juices should be clear, without any trace of pink coloring.
- Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Refrigerate leftovers immediately. Perishable foods should not be left at room temperature for longer than two hours.



Source: <http://www.slcohealth.org/media/2008/pdf/20081121.pdf>

## Personal Preparedness: Why Prepare?

Disasters disrupt hundreds of thousands of lives each year. Each disaster has its own lasting effects on families and property. They can happen anytime, anywhere, and almost always without warning. Preparing yourself and your loved ones can help reduce fear, anxiety, and will save lives during and after an event. Disasters will happen. Are you prepared? Midland Health & Senior Services urges City of Midland / Midland County residents to take an active role in planning and preparing for emergencies.

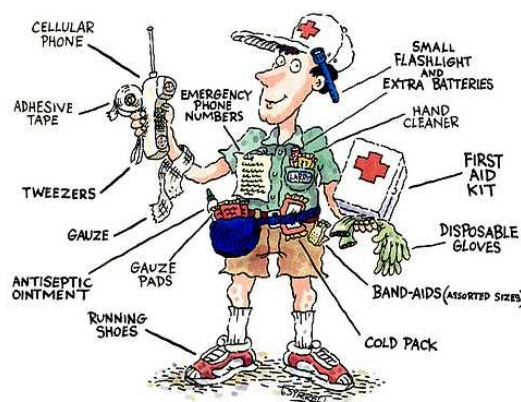
### Building Your Personal Plan

- Immediately after a disaster, there may be a brief or long term disruption in vital services such as running water, electricity, and communication sources.
- Talk with your family about potential disasters that might affect your area and the importance of being prepared.
- Involve all family members in identifying potential risks/hazards, evacuation routes out of your home and your neighborhood, and a meeting place to go to if you are separated.
- Additionally, develop a communications plan on how you will communicate if members of your family are separated and who the point-of-contact will be. Your family may not be together when an emergency happens, so it is important to plan in advance how you will contact one another and how you will get back together.

### Building Your Personal Kit

- The first line of defense is your own preparedness efforts. Local emergency responders may not be able to assist you or your loved ones immediately following a disaster. Therefore, it is recommended that you be self-sufficient for at least 72-hours (3 days).
- After considering the needs of your household and the disasters or emergencies that may occur in your area, you may wish to increase the inventory and extend the length of your home supply to 2-weeks. This may include water, food, sanitation, first aid, and shelter.
- Be aware of the hazards in your area and know how to respond.

**Remember, awareness and preparedness will save lives!**



## Keeping Track of Immunizations Made Easier with Registry

Were you frantically looking for your child's immunization records in time for back to school registration? Are you an adult who cannot remember the last time you received a Tetanus vaccine?

Record keeping doesn't have to be a tedious or stressful task. ImmTrac helps parents and doctors ensure that children are vaccinated on time. It can also help avoid unnecessary vaccinations. If your child changes doctors or school, their immunization history remains conveniently available in ImmTrac.

ImmTrac, the Texas Immunization registry, is a free service offered by the Department of State Health Services. ImmTrac is a secure and confidential registry available to all Texans. ImmTrac safely consolidates and stores immunization information electronically in one centralized system. Texas Law requires written consent for ImmTrac participation and limits access to the Registry to only those individuals who have been authorized by law. ImmTrac contains several million immunizations records and continues to rapidly grow with increased participation.

This valuable information comes from a variety of sources including private health care providers, public health clinics, Medicaid claims administrator, the Bureau of Vital Statistics and Women Infants and Children clinics. Regardless of the number of sources, each client's immunization information is consolidated into one electronic record. Authorized professionals such as doctors, nurses and public health providers can access client's vaccination histories.

The registry is a major component of the Midland Health Department's initiative to increase vaccination coverage across Midland. Midland Health & Senior Services key role in the program is to collect data from all healthcare providers and payers who are required to report all vaccines administered to children younger than 18 years of age. During the birth certificate registration process, parents must be given the opportunity to grant consent for Registry participation or request their child be excluded from the Registry or, at any time, may submit a child's immunization history to ImmTrac to be included in the Registry.

In 2007, ImmTrac added the capability of entering immunization information on **first responders (peace officers, fire protection personnel, emergency medical services personnel)** and their immediate family members 18 years of age and older. The Registry was also used to capture and track information about persons who received an immunization, antivirals, or other medication administered to prepare for a potential or declared disaster, public health emergency, or in response to an event.

To register for ImmTrac, call the Immunization Branch at (800) 252-9152 and request ImmTrac registration information or visit [www.ImmTrac.com](http://www.ImmTrac.com)

